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Via ECFS  
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of Petition of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to  
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

I live in a small city in the midst of a very rural area, in Lexington VA. The choice of internet service with any speed is pretty abysmal, but it would be way more abysmal if we didn't have access to a local ISP that only covers our immediate area.

When we have gotten our internet service from one of the big guys (whether one of the Verizon clones or Centurylink) we never know when we're actually going to be able to access the promised speed or whether there will be a slow-down due to that giant provider amalgamating large geographical swaths into one provider zone, which naturally makes everyone in that very wide geographical zone vulnerable to storm outages and the like over quite a piece of territory. This is no way to provide decent internet service to places that have fewer people per square mile.

Do not take any action which reduces broadband competition especially in rural areas. The giant providers love to be the only game in town so they can charge what they want and we have to accept that or eschew internet service - which these days isn't really a viable option for business contacts, online shopping (often critical in rural areas without many major stores), non-profit work, or personal communication.

And do not allow giant providers to raise prices for rural communities, even WITH decent competition. This country needs the products (such as most of our food) that is grown in rural areas, and those growers need reliable, affordable broadband internet service to further their businesses.

Encouraging competition, and discouraging monopoly suppliers is the way business is done best in the USA. Stop sidelining local providers by paying ridiculous subsidies to the giant providers who are already making way more money than God. Level the playing field, don't kick the smaller guys off the field. We need all sizes of providers all over this country. Please keep it so!

Margaret Dyson-Cobb